

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 16312 121920Z

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SUBJECT: VISIT OF WILLIAM TAYLOR, PRESIDENT, BOSTON GLOBE

1. WILLIAM G. TAYLOR, PRESIDENT OF THE BOSTON GLOBE, RECEIVED THE RED CARPET TREATMENT LAST WEEK IN MOSCOW, THOUGH HE WAS TRAVELING AS A TOURIST. VISITS TO THE CHIEF EDITORS OF PRAVDA AND IZVESTIYA PROBABLY WOULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED A FEW YEARS AGO. BUT IF THE MESSAGE IS MEANT TO BE THAT DETENTE IS ALIVE AND WELL -- IN MOSCOW -- THERE IS THE COUNTERWEIGHT -- THAT THE SOVIETS ARE DEMONSTRATIVELY WORRIED ABOUT THE US COMMITMENT TO THIS PROCESS. THE REMOVAL OF SCHLESINGER IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, IT IS FELT.

2. BEFORE LEAVING THE USA FOR A BRIEF TOURIST TRIP THROUGH THE SOVIET UNION, MR. TAYLOR ASKED P&C MOSCOW TO ARRANGE MEETINGS WITH APPROPRIATE NEWSPAPER OFFICIALS HERE. COMPLICATING HIS REQUEST WAS THAT THE TAYLORS' TIME WAS LIMITED TO ONLY TWO DAYS IN MOSCOW, AND ON THE EVE OF THE NOVEMBER 7 LONG WEEKEND. IN THE EVENT, TAYLOR'S VISIT WAS TREATED VIRTUALLY AS A COMMAND PERFORMANCE AT BOTH PRAVDA AND IZVESTIYA, WHERE TAYLOR, THE P&C COUNSELOR AND THE PRESS ATTACHE WERE RECEIVED BY THE EDITORS IN CHIEF, THEIR DEPUTIES, FOREIGN EDITORS AND MEMBERS OF THE FOREIGN DESKS. COMING ON NOVEMBER 5, JUST TWO DAYS AFTER THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CABINET-LEVEL CHANGES IN WASHINGTON,

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 16312 121920Z

THIS IMPRESSIVE LINEUP OF SOVIET HOSTS LED TO SOME INTERESTING,

IF PREDICTABLE EXCHANGES.

3. THE MORE INTERESTING CALL WAS AT PRAVDA, WHERE MR. TAYLOR'S RATHER PRO-FORMA QUESTIONS ON DETENTE, CHINA, ETC., WERE MET WITH SOME STATEMENTS BY DEPUTY CHIEF EDITOR NEKRASOV WHICH WERE LATER "CLARIFIED" BY CHIEF EDITOR ZIMYANIN. NEKRASOV STATED THAT SCHLESINGER'S REMOVAL COULD "ONLY HELP" US-USSR RELATIONS. SCHLESINGER WAS "NO FRIEND" OF THE USSR, AND HAD BEEN AN OPPONENT OF DETENTE. RUMSFIELD COULDN'T BE WORSE IN THIS REGARD, AND HE HAD THE ADVANTAGE OF BEING CLOSE TO THE PRESIDENT, WHO, AS IS SECRETARY KISSINGER, IF SEEN AS FAVORING DETENTE. A DISCUSSION OF THE COLBY-BUSH SWITCH LED TO CURRENT USSR-CHINESE RELATIONS. NEKRASOV SAID CHINA WAS A THREAT, BUT NOT AN IMMINENT DANGER. THOUGH "POLITICAL" RELATIONS ARE NOT GOOD NOW, THE CHINESE PEOPLE ARE ESSENTIALLY PEACEFUL AND EVENTUALLY THE "TRADITION OF CENTURIES" WOULD OVERCOME THE HOSTILITIES BETWEEN THE USSR AND PRC. IN ANOTHER CONTEXT -- ON RISING PRINTING COSTS -- NEKRASOV ADMITTED THAT THE USSR HAS SERIOUS INFLATIONARY PROBLEMS, OBVIOUS TO ANYONE MAKING PURCHASES HERE OVER A PERIOD OF TIME. ABOUT HALF HOUR INTO THE MEETING, CHIEF EDITOR ZIMYANIN CAME IN AND IMMEDIATELY TOOK OVER THE DISCUSSION. HE DID NOT COMMENT DIRECTLY ON THE CHANGES IN THE US, SAYING THAT DETENTE WAS PROGRESSING AND THAT THE USSR HOPES THAT THE US WOULD NOW FIND IT EASIER TO PURSUE A POLICY OF IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH THE USSR. REGARDING THE PRC, ZIMYANIN SAID IT POSED A GRAVE DANGER TO WORLD PEACE, WHICH THE US UNDERESTIMATES BUT WHICH THE USSR DOESN'T. MAO IS A MAN WHO "HAS ONE FOOT IN THE GRAVE AND IS TRYING TO PULL MANKIND INTO IT WITH HIM." AS FOR INFLATION IN THE USSR, ZIMYANIN COULDN'T DISCUSS IT, AS "IT DOESN'T EXIST." THE DIFFERENCES IN VIEWS AMONG THE PRAVDA EDITORS WERE NOT FURTHER EXPLORED BY THE PRINCIPALS. (A NICE FOOTNOTE WAS THE STATEMENT BY ONE OF PRAVDA'S DEPUTY FOREIGN EDITORS, AFTER ZIMYANIN JOINED THE MEETING, THAT THE EMBASSY'S NEWS BULLETIN WAS A WELCOME AND USEFUL SOURCE OF NEWS).

4. LEV TOLKUNOV, IZVESTIYA'S CHIEF EDITOR, ALSO GAVE THE PARTY LINE ON THE PRC -- IT'S A RISK, THE USSR IS WATCHFUL -- ALTHOUGH NOT SO SHARPLY AS DID ZIMYANIN. HE ASSESSED SCHLESINGER'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 16312 121920Z

REMOVAL AS A CLEAR PLUS FOR DETENTE, THEN FOCUSED HIS QUESTIONS ON THE EFFECT OF THE ANNOUNCED CHANGES ON THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS. WOULD THEY ENHANCE FORD'S CHANCES, AND WHAT ABOUT KENNEDY? TOLKUNOV SAID THAT KENNEDY, BECAUSE OF HIS NAME AND OF THE GOOD IMPRESSION HE MADE DURING A VISIT TO THE USSR (TOLKUNOV MET HIM AT THAT TIME) WOULD BE CONSIDERED A GOOD CANDIDATE BY THE SOVIETS. TOLKUNOV AGREED WITH TAYLOR'S REPLY TO HIS QUESTION, THAT NOTHING WOULD HAPPEN ON THE JACKSON/

VANIK AMENDMENT TO THE TRADE ACT UNTIL AFTER THE US ELECTION.
IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ON IMMIGRATION, TOLKUNOV CLAIMED THAT
MORE JEWS ARE IN POSSESSION OF PERMISSION TO DEPART THE USSR --
BUT AREN'T LEAVING -- THAN WERE CURRENTLY APPLYING.
THIS NUMBER IS DECREASING, AND THE USSR COULD DO NO MORE IN
THIS AREA.

5. COMMENT: THE IMPRESSION LEFT BY TAYLOR'S RECEPTION IS
THAT THE WORD HAS GONE FORTH TO "PRACTICE DETENTE," MOREOVER,
THAT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GLOBE IN NEW ENGLAND IS UNDERSTOOD.
ZIMYANIN AND TOLKUNOV ARE CLEARLY MORE POLITICAL FIGURES THAN
NEWSPAPERMEN. NOT ONLY DO THEIR POSITIONS IN THE PARTY
REFLECT THIS, BUT ALSO THEIR EXCHANGES WITH TAYLOR AND THEIR
OBVIOUS RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR STAFFS. THE MEETINGS WERE
BRIEF, BUT IF THE DISCUSSIONS WERE CURTAILED, THE
HOSPITALITY AT THE TABLE WAS IN TRUE RUSSIAN STYLE. AND THE
MESSAGE CAME THROUGH -- DETENTE IS ALIVE AND WELL IN THE SOVIET
UNION. AND IF ONE WORRIED ABOUT ITS HEALTH IN THE US, THE
SIGNS ARE FOR IMPROVEMENT NOW. WITH THE "BAD" SCHLESINGER OUT, THE
"GOOD" FORD AND KISSINGER WILL FIND IT EASIER TO FOLLOW THE
STRAIGHT AND NARROW.
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